

THE FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HELD BUDGET MEETING ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 29<sup>TH</sup>, 2008, AT 5:30 P.M., IN THE EXECUTIVE BOARD ROOM AT THE FRANKLIN CENTER.

THERE WERE PRESENT: Charles Wagner, Chairman  
Leland Mitchell  
David Cundiff  
Bobby Thompson  
David Hurt

ABSENT: Wayne Angell, Vice-Chairman  
Russ Johnson

OTHERS PRESENT: Richard E. Huff, II, County Administrator  
Larry V. Moore, Asst. County Administrator  
Sharon K. Tudor, CMC, Clerk

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Chairman Charles Wagner called the meeting to order.  
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Invocation was given by Supervisor Bobby Thompson.  
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**TOBACCO GRANT APPLICATION**

Scott Martin, Director of Commerce & Leisure Services, advised the Board staff was notified by the Virginia Tobacco Commission (TIC) in mid-January that another round of County allocated funds would be made available for the tobacco region. TIC funds available in this round must be spent on capital projects, (bricks and mortar) that enhance the economic development in Franklin County. The grant applications are due to TIC staff on February 1. The full commission will be award grantees on April 24.

Economic development projects submitted in this round must meet the strategic goals of the Virginia Tobacco Commission and the applying entity. Further, award of these funds is helped greatly if the projects are regional and leveraged. There is a total of \$1.3 million available to eligible Franklin County projects in this grant round. If the County is unsuccessful in securing TIC support for these projects, the unallocated funds will rollover to the next grant round. These funds must be expended on capital projects within Franklin County.

Staff met with the Town of Rocky Mount and Ferrum College earlier this week and developed a comprehensive grant request that would fund three independent projects. All of the projects below are identified in the County's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, the County's Comprehensive Plan, the County's existing Capital Improvement Program, or the County's Tourism Development Strategy.

- Outdoor Venue at the Blue Ridge Institute
- Franklin County/Rocky Mount Industrial Park Phase II (Cox Property) Industrial Road Access
- Pigg RiverPark Phase I at Veteran's Park

**Blue Ridge Institute Outdoor Venue**

Franklin County is the eastern gateway to Virginia's Musical Heritage Trail. The Blue Ridge Institute serves as the first major venue along the internationally recognized travel route. Further, the Institute's repository of music and Appalachian folk heritage is widely regarded as being the most significant library of "roots" music in Virginia. Thus far the County is lacking a major venue. Travelers and tourists passing through our County may stop of the Institute but then head quickly up to Floyd to hear live music. Unfortunately, for our local businesses and musicians, these travelers are missing the Crooked Road's most active live music community – Franklin. The proposal contained here would construct an outdoor amphitheater at the Institute programmed and scheduled by Ferrum College, the Crooked Road, and the Franklin County Department of Commerce and Leisure Services to host regular live musical performances during the warmer months. This venue will be able to seat over 1000 people in a lawn setting. The stage facility will also be used by the Blue Ridge Folklife Festival, campus events, and possibly, private events. The Blue Ridge Dinner Theater may also make use of the site for outdoor performing arts series in the summer months.

A venue of this size will allow the County, and Blue Ridge Institute, to highlight the musical talent of our region and provide a reason for visitors to begin, or end, their Crooked Road experience here thus contributing to visitor expenditures in Franklin County. The proposed stage will be constructed similar to the design below. Staff requests authority to support this effort through a letter of endorsement and contribution of \$25,000 to the construction therein should the grant be awarded to the Blue Ridge Foundation. Funding for this match is presently available in the County's Economic Development budget. Below is the proposed cost breakdown:

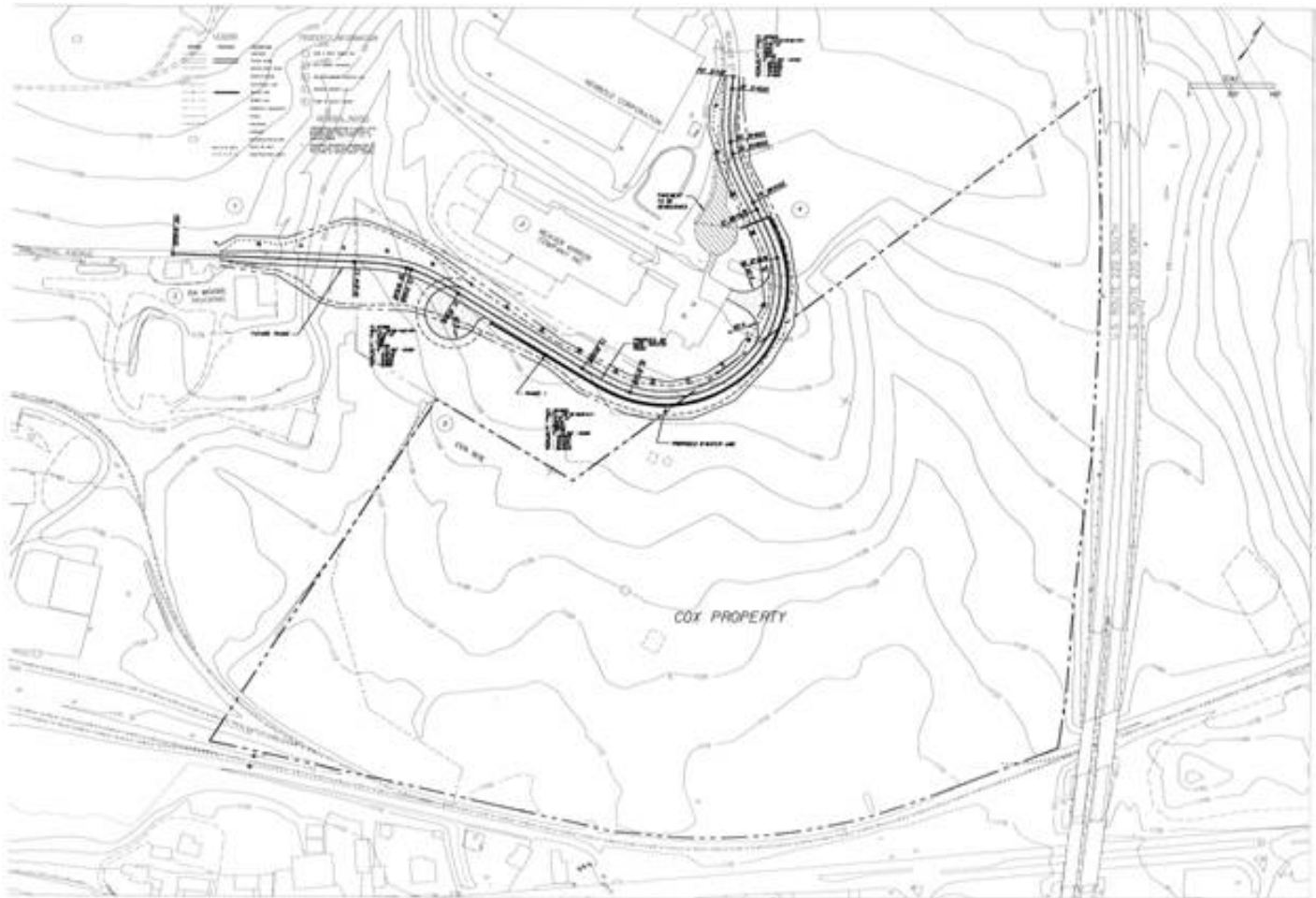
- Ferrum College Land Value/Existing Improvements – (Bobby Thompson)
- Ferrum College/Blue Ridge Foundation Cash Contribution – (Bobby Thompson Address)
- Franklin County Contribution - \$25,000
- TIC Grant Request - \$300,000



### **Franklin County/Rocky Mount Industrial Park Phase II Industrial Access Road**

In 2004, the Town acquired 65 acres adjacent to the existing Franklin County/Rocky Mount Industrial Park. This property, frequently referenced as the Cox Property, is one of the most competitive rail development sites in the region. The Town decided to abandon the transloading concept for the parcel and thus open the entire 65 acres for prospect consideration. Development of the site to date has been constrained due to a lack of access. To bring this site to a more competitive position in the economic development marketing efforts of the region and state, staff recommends partnering with the Town of Rocky Mount, VDOT, Norfolk Southern, and hopefully the Virginia Tobacco Commission to complete utility stubs and industrial road access. This road will provide access to 50 acres of developable land that can be easily divided into three pads. Total cost for the road and utilities is \$1.1 million. The proposed funding strategy to complete development is divided out as follows:

- VDOT Industrial Access - \$300,000
- Existing Tobacco Grant For Site Improvements (Road) - \$179,000
- Franklin County New Match- \$100,000
- Town of Rocky Mount - \$100,000
- New TIC Funding Request - \$421,000

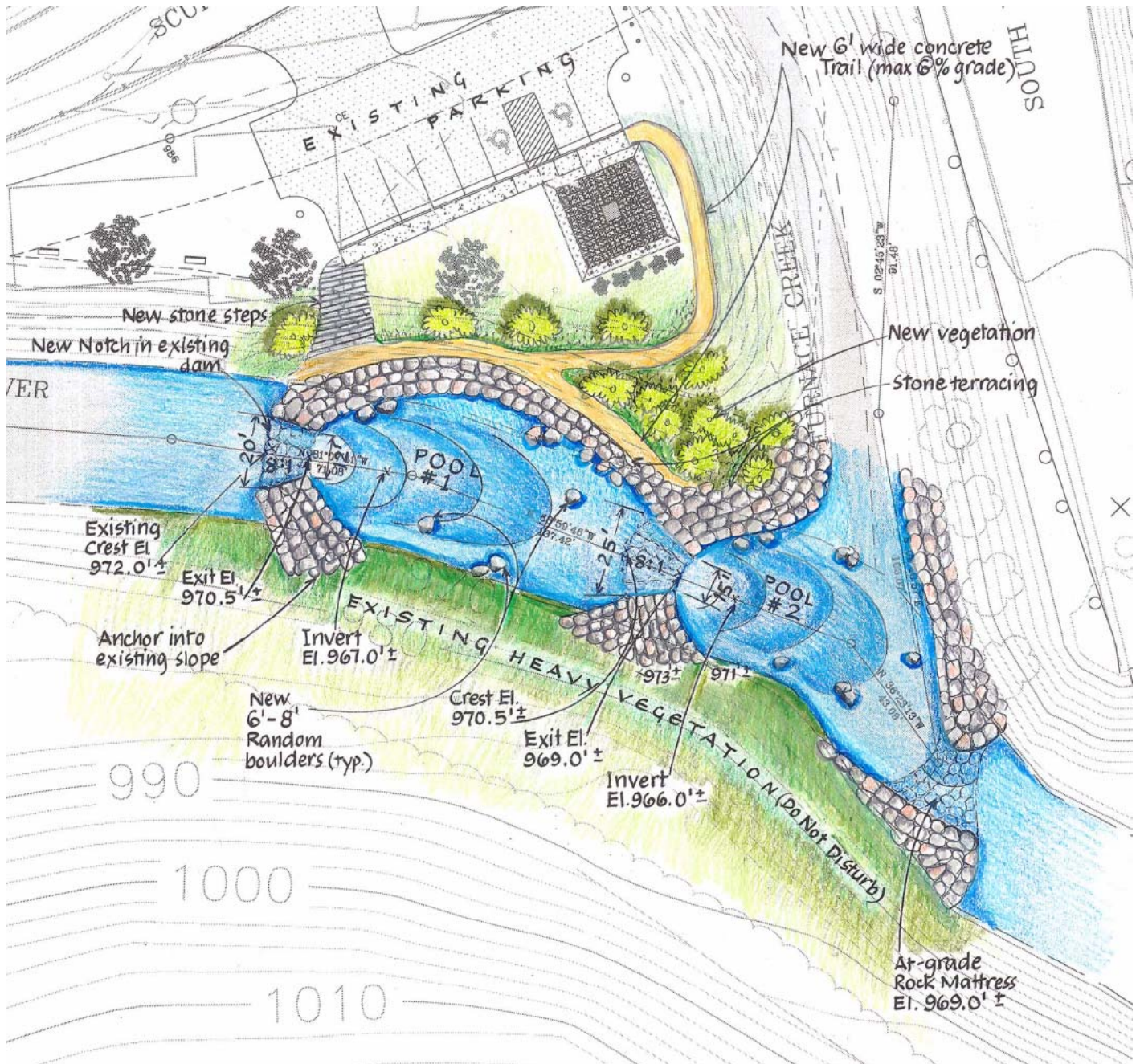


**Pigg River Park Phase I (Veterans Park Site)**

Pigg River Park is a series of parks and public access points that will connect over 63 miles of free flowing river in Franklin County. The Pigg River Power Dam project is moving forward through the environmental assessment. As this HUGE project moves forward through significant engineering development processes, staff recommends that the Board move forward with a pilot in-stream project at the Veteran’s Park site. This project will remove a killer hydraulic on the river and replace it with a series of wave features that will permit fish and boat passage. Further, development of these features at this site will enhance community river events such as the Pigg River Ramble by allowing for a festival setting at the race finish. Below is the conceptual plan for the site. This plan can be completed for \$250,000. Staff requests Board support to apply for \$200,000 in TIC support for this project to be matched by a County contribution of \$50,000 (\$50,000 is set aside in the existing Pigg River Park budget and can be applied to this project). The project will be completed this summer. The proposed project breakdown is below:

- Franklin County - \$50,000
- Town of Rocky Mount Value of Existing Land - \$100,000
- Tobacco Commission Grant - \$200,000





**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff requests BOS consideration of the above grant requests. Staff requests that the BOS set aside County funds (\$175,000) to serve as a match should the projects secure funding. County funds would only be applied if the grant funds are awarded by TIC.

**(RESOLUTION #34-01-2008)**

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, by the Board of Supervisors to authorize staff to apply for the Virginia Tobacco Commission Economic Development Grant Round for the County's Economic Development Allocation (Spring 2008) for the following projects that meet the County's 2008 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, 2006 Franklin County Comprehensive Plan, and/or the County's 2007 Tourism Development Strategic Plan:

- Blue Ridge Institute Outdoor Performance Venue
  - TIC Request of \$300,000
    - County Match of \$25,000
- Franklin County/ Rocky Mount Industrial Park Phase II
  - TIC Request of \$421,000
    - County Match of \$100,000
- Pigg RiverPark Rocky Mount Site
  - TIC Request of \$200,000
    - County Match of \$75,000

MOTION BY: David Hurt

SECONDED BY: David Cundiff

VOTING ON THE MOTION WAS AS FOLLOWS:

AYES: Mitchell, Hurt, Cundiff, & Wagner

ABSTAINED: Thompson (On Request #1)

ABSENT: Angell & Johnson

THE MOTION PASSED WITH A 4-0-1-2 VOTE

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